

BOB CRAVES
Chair



MARC GASPARD
Executive Director

STATE OF WASHINGTON

HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

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RESOLUTION NO. 03-05

WHEREAS, The state of Washington's current budget shortfall threatens to undermine the state's longstanding commitment to our residents' access to an affordable, high-quality college education; and

WHEREAS, During the 1990s, the most prosperous time in Washington's history, the state allowed higher education funding to erode in comparison to other states; and

WHEREAS, Governor Locke faced a very difficult task in proposing a balanced state budget in the face of a funding shortfall of approximately \$2 billion in the 2003-05 biennium; and

WHEREAS, The Higher Education Coordinating Board appreciates the Governor's commitment to ensuring state financial aid grants keep pace with tuition increases, and his proposal to create a high-demand enrollment pool at the HECB to provide resources for new programs in fields where both student enrollment pressure and employers' needs for skilled graduates exceed available supply; and

WHEREAS, Despite these efforts, the 2003-05 budget for higher education represents an actual reduction in funding for public colleges and universities from levels that are already inadequate to meet the state's needs; and

WHEREAS, The proposed budget would shift an even-greater financial burden onto students and families in the form of 9-percent annual tuition increases with no accompanying increase in state support; and

WHEREAS, The budget makes no allowance for the 16,000 "over-enrolled" full-time students the state's colleges and universities are serving without state financial support; and

WHEREAS, This budget contains no provision in either of the next two years for a general salary increase for the state's thousands of dedicated college and university employees;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Higher Education Coordinating Board renews its call for a major investment in higher education in order to increase enrollment opportunities, restore core funding, keep tuition affordable and predictable, and provide financial aid to Washington students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Higher Education Coordinating Board renews its commitment to work with members of the legislative and executive branches of state government to identify sources of dedicated funding that will preserve and enhance Washington's higher education system.

Adopted:

January 29, 2003

Attest:

Bob Craves, Chair

Pat Stanford, Secretary